

HALIFAX metro

NEWS
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SHARING.

Number crunchers to crack crimes

Police have funds to focus on priorities and hire analysts **PAGE 3**

How to watch someone disappear completely

Bus Stop brings 'extraordinarily artful' theatre show to Halifax **PAGE 13**

'I love those boys ...'

Huskies will hold Tom Strong Night as team continues to stand by assistant coach Tom Lee through battle with cancer **PAGE 17**



STAMKOS STOPS SHORT OF SOCHI

TAMPA BAY STAR OUT OF GAMES AFTER TESTS SHOW HIS BROKEN LEG HASN'T FULLY HEALED **PAGE 18**



POSITIVELY PINNING

Judy Haiven, a professor at Saint Mary's University, shows off some of the buttons she and her husband created in hopes of changing the culture at the school. The buttons display anti-intolerance messages. Story, page 5. JEFF HARPER/METRO

Pilot project is ready to roll

Who's got 2 wheels and wants to use them? N.S. launches long-term Segway test



HALEY RYAN
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A new Segway project is ready to roll across Nova Scotia, but a Halifax councillor said he doesn't see the idea gaining traction with local residents.

Those who own or lease at least three Segways can apply to take part in the project, the province announced Wednesday.

"I think it's interesting," said downtown Halifax Coun. Wayne Mason, but added Segways haven't become popular even in warmer climates where they're used all year round.

"I don't want to stand in its way with regulation, I'm just not too sure exactly who would use it," he said.

Transportation Minister Geoff MacLellan said it's a project for exploring alternative transportation options.

"I can't stress enough how critical road safety will factor into the final pilot project evaluation," he said in a release.

Under the project rules, Segway users must use helmets and be at least 16 years old, or 14 with a guardian's consent. They can't travel faster than 20 kilometres per hour, and can't be used on roads with a speed limit higher than 60 km/h.

Riders would act as cyclists on a bike path or trail, but Mason said he doesn't think large groups of Segways should be taking up space on those routes.

"It's not biking, it's not a lot of physical activity,"

Mason said. "It's motorized transport ... I don't see those as necessarily compatible uses."

The pilot project will run until January 2016, when the department will decide whether to amend the Motor Vehicle Act to allow Segway use in the province permanently.

As of now, Segways are permitted only on private property. In Halifax, you can find them during the summer months on the waterfront.

"We are open to the idea and we'll have to see where the pilot project goes and what kind of legislative framework is in place to make sure that everyone is safe," said Halifax Regional Police spokesman Const. Pierre Bourdages.

"We'll just have to react to whatever the province does," added HRM Mayor Mike Savage when asked about the issue.



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'Well deserving'

Volunteer numbers down, honorariums up for firefighters

Volunteer firefighters in HRM will see their honorarium fund go up next year, as regional council approved an extra \$200,000 for the participation system Wednesday.

Chief Doug Trussler presented the proposed \$58 million budget from Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency to regional council's committee of the whole, and asked them to approve four service enhancements totaling \$677,000 which included the honorarium increase.

Honorariums are paid to volunteers for participation, and each point (about one hour) will reach just over \$12. Trussler said they wanted the points to be similar to minimum wage.

"We do ask a lot of our volunteers," Trussler said to reporters after the extra funds were approved alongside the full budget. "They're very well deserving of that."

Trussler also said some stations aren't meeting the service standards of four firefighters per truck, and sometimes go with two or three people.

Volunteer numbers are dwindling, Trussler said, especially in rural areas like the Eastern Shore.

He said a solution could be putting more career staff in those areas, but they're working on a master plan to tackle everything that will go to council later this spring.

HALEY RYAN/METRO



Halifax Regional Police Chief Jean-Michel Blais is shown in this file photo. JEFF HARPER/METRO

New data analysts to look at HRM crime

'Crime dividend'. Budget up due to automatic salary hike, police chief says



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A drop in homicides and court time has allowed the Halifax Regional Police to move funds around in order to focus on issues like sexual violence and traffic, says the chief of the Halifax Regional Police.

During a budget presentation at regional council Wednesday,

Chief Jean-Michel Blais said less court hours and overtime salary for officers has led to a "crime dividend" they will re-invest into equipment, training and priorities like cold cases, domestic violence, and traffic collisions.

"In 2013 we had 17 people who were killed (in accidents)," Blais said, compared to six homicides.

"We have a tendency ... to concentrate on just homicide statistics. I'd like us to be able to concentrate on the traffic instances as well."

Although a step up from last year's \$73.8 million budget, the \$76.2 million

HRP budget was approved, with councillors like Barry Dalrymple voicing their support for the hiring of two new data analysts.

"Anything to do with crime analysis, I think that's what's driving right now the decrease in crime," said Dalrymple.

Blais said most of the extra funds needed are due to \$2.4 million in salary increases through a contract agreement.

Police are "very, very pleased" with the Comstat crime-tracking map, Blais said, adding the force is working on a real-time crime centre where staff could relay details

Consultation

Although in the early stages right now, Blais said HRP are consulting an architecture firm about a new public-safety building police could share with emergency services, sheriffs, Halifax RCMP and have space for residents to use.

to an officer on their way to an incident so they're prepared for a dangerous situation.

HRP will soon have 12 analysts, compared to one last year, Blais said.

1 NEWS



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Home invasion. Police search for three suspects

Police are asking for the public's help in identifying three men from an alleged Halifax home invasion that saw the victim threatened with a handgun and a crowbar.

The victim, a 25-year-old man, was home alone in his apartment in the 2600 block of Gladstone Street on Dec. 17 at 1 a.m., when he heard a knock at the door.

When he answered, police say he was confronted by three men who had their faces covered, and two were armed with weapons.

The apartment was then ransacked and police say the men stole various electronic items, clothing and personal belongings.

The victim wasn't hurt, and ran to a nearby store to call police. Officers arrived and a K9 unit was deployed, but the three men couldn't be located.

About 90 minutes after the break-in, police say two of the suspects walked into the Scotiabank on 5656 Spring Garden Rd. and were caught on a video surveillance camera trying to access the victim's bank account. They left a short time later on foot.

On Wednesday, police issued still images of the two suspects from the video surveillance camera at the bank.

Anyone with information on the two men's identities is asked to contact police at 490-5016. **METRO**



Images of two suspects police are looking for. CONTRIBUTED

Accident. Man, 69, killed by excavator machine

Police say a 69-year-old man is dead after he was found trapped between the bucket arm and body of an excavator while working on a private property near the community of River John.

The accident happened just before 1 p.m. on Wednesday, with Colchester District RCMP and Tatamagouche Fire arriving on scene to find the dead man's body.

Victim

The victim's name hasn't been released pending notification of next of kin.

Police say the death has been turned over to the province's medical examiner office.

METRO

Stellarton

Search of home leads to drug charges

A 25-year-old man is facing drug charges after Nova Scotia police executed a search warrant in Stellarton on Wednesday morning. Police said they seized 269 marijuana plants, 31 dried marijuana, 42 contraband cigarettes and growing equipment during the mid-morning search. **METRO**

Nova Scotia

RCMP appoint commanding officer

The RCMP in Nova Scotia are getting a new commanding officer. Chief Supt. Brian Brennan will take over Feb. 15 with the retirement of assistant commissioner Alphonse MacNeil. MacNeil announced his retirement last month after 38 years with the police force. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**



Haligonians hit with snow ... for third straight week

A pedestrian uses an umbrella to shield himself from the snow on Spring Garden Road on Wednesday. For the third straight week, Haligonians were hit with a mid-week snow storm. The snow began as forecasted Wednesday afternoon, and was to continue through to about midnight. **JEFF HARPER/METRO**

Taxi rules need to be changed: Buffett

Accessibility.

Association says some cabs aren't servicing wheelchair users



RUTH DAVENPORT
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City staff are looking into a list of proposed changes to accessible taxi regulations in HRM.

Halifax Taxi Drivers Owners Association president Dave Buffett told the Transportation Standing Committee Tuesday that current rules need to be changed in order to ensure service for people with disabilities in all HRM

taxi zones.

As it stands, accessible taxis aren't restricted to a single zone, as are conventional taxis.

"The result is that in the HRM, drivers buy accessible taxis simply to get a Halifax rooftop," states Buffett's presentation. "Only four of the over 30 accessible taxis pick up persons with a wheelchair."

The association is recommending dividing all accessible cabs equally among the existing taxi zones to ensure equal access for people with disabilities.

Buffett also told the committee all new licenses issued in HRM from now on should be for accessible taxis

In numbers

34

The number of accessible taxis currently licensed in HRM.

— specifically minivans — equipped to carry two wheelchairs simultaneously.

"If two people in wheelchairs are going downtown ... they both pay \$15, \$20, \$30," he said. "With a two-chair capacity ... it means people can take the taxi plus 70 cents, none of this two taxis."

The association also recommends accessible taxis be dispatched in the same manner as conventional cabs.

Currently, anyone who calls for an accessible van is given a list of phone numbers and told to deal directly with the driver.

HRM's regional co-ordinator of taxi and limousine services told the committee the provincial Motor Vehicle Act has several stipulations that affect HRM's taxi service.

"(We) cannot directly or indirectly limit the vehicle," he said. "We cannot limit the number of drivers and we cannot limit the type of clientele to which those services are offered."

Hindle said HRM staff have begun legal consultations on the proposals and could have a report back to the committee in April.

Third crosswalk incident in just two days

A 46-year-old man suffered some bruising but no serious injuries when he was knocked to the ground after being struck by a vehicle in a crosswalk on Wednesday night.

The accident happened at 6:30 p.m. at the intersection of Mumford Road and Ashburn Avenue in Halifax.

The driver, a 69-year-old man, left the scene after providing his information to the

victim, and was later ticketed by police for failing to yield to a pedestrian in a crosswalk.

The crosswalk accident was the third in HRM in the past two days.

A 24-year-old woman was

also hit in a crosswalk in Clayton Park on Tuesday night and a 45-year-old woman was struck crossing Oxford street in Halifax on Tuesday morning.

METRO

Pushing all the right buttons at Saint Mary's University

Sexism. Business professors handing out buttons with anti-intolerance message in response to racist and misogynistic tweets



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Two professors at Saint Mary's University have launched a grassroots awareness campaign in hopes of changing the culture around sexism and intolerance on campus.

Dr. Judy Haiven said she and her husband designed and crafted buttons for students, faculty, staff and administrators to wear in response to a series of misogynistic and racist tweets sent by Saint Mary's football players last month.

"I thought taking this small step of making these buttons would encourage people to wear them and stand up and say, 'I'm not for all the bad things; I'm for the good things,'" said Haiven.

The tweets from football players came about a month after Saint Mary's made national headlines for a pro-rape chant involving hundreds of frosh students and leaders.

Several of the football players were suspended last month, and the frosh chant inspired a report and recommendations to improve the culture of sexualized violence on campus.

But Haiven said the buttons offer every individual a personal opportunity to inspire dialogue and be part of the slow process of changing attitudes.

"It's going to be small gestures like this that change the culture," she said. "Not mega gestures from the athletes or mega gestures from the admin-

Quoted

"I teach here, and I want to be proud of the place where I teach ... I feel that it's extremely important to change the culture, because the students will ultimately suffer."

Dr. Judy Haiven, Saint Mary's University professor

istration."

So far, Haiven and her husband — another professor at Saint Mary's — have made about 200 of the buttons and given out 150. She said interest has been sufficient to consider having a professional manufacturer make up a larger batch.

"We're trying to change the culture of the thinking people at the university, and there's a lot of us," she said. "There's thousands, actually."



The buttons created by Saint Mary's University professor Judy Haiven. JEFF HARPER/METRO

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Broken generator to force the HMCS Windsor into dry dock

Sub-standard? Issue was detected soon after sub finished up five-year refit period

The navy says its only operating submarine on the East Coast will have to undergo repairs for six to seven months because of a broken generator.

Capt. Peter Ryan says

HMCS Windsor will be out of commission for repairs from March until September at a navy facility in Halifax.

Ryan says the generator is one of two on the submarine that provide a crucial source of power for the vessel.

He says it is a key piece of equipment that must be fixed before the submarine can return to operations.

The submarine spent five years in a refit from 2007 until the middle of 2012,

when it was returned to service.

The navy said in an email late Wednesday that the problem with the generator was detected shortly after it returned to sea.

Spokeswoman navy Lt. Jennifer Fidler said the work to correct the problem has been planned for months. She estimated the cost of installing a replacement would be about \$1.5 million.

The navy's four subma-

rines were once heralded as a great bargain for taxpayers, but the poor condition of the British-built, diesel-electric vessels has since tarnished their reputation.

Prior problems with the fleet include extensive rust, flooding and hull dents.

HMCS Victoria — based on the West Coast — is now the navy's only fully operational submarine, having completed the test firing of a live torpedo. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**



The HMCS Windsor HALIFAX DAILY NEWS FILE



Driver of van killed in head-on collision with tractor trailer

Police investigate a fatal crash on Highway 104 in French River on Wednesday afternoon. Police say a van and tractor trailer were going in opposite directions when they collided. The driver of the van died at the scene. The driver of the tractor trailer suffered non-life threatening injuries. **NEW GLASGOW NEWS**

Energy East Pipeline plan. President seeks early start on filling future positions

The president of the Energy East Pipeline encouraged a business audience Wednesday to start registering for possible work on the proposed cross-country project.

Steve Pohlod said in a speech at the Maritimes Energy Association in Halifax that the subsidiary of TransCanada will need everything from security personnel for work camps to geotechnical experts and mechanical engineers if the 4,500-kilometre project is approved.

The executive invited firms to start registering on

a company website for a pre-qualification process.

"The time to start is now. Though we're in early days, it's never too early to start some of these activities," Pohlod said at the evening gathering.

The executive didn't say precisely how much local work is guaranteed for firms from each province but did say the company will consider hiring in the areas where it is building the pipeline.

"We need to develop strategies that will develop local opportunities," he said.

NEW GLASGOW NEWS

Premature?

"The time to start is now. Though we're in early days, it's never too early to start some of these activities."

Steve Pohlod, president of the Energy East Pipeline

Provincial Exhibition. N.S. calls loan and takes assets

The Nova Scotia government has called a loan and taken over the assets of the indebted commission that runs the Provincial Exhibition and a harness racing track.

Agriculture Minister Keith Colwell says the Nova Scotia Farm Loan Board has asked the Nova Scotia Provincial Exhibition Commission in Truro to repay its loan.

Colwell says the commission has a combined loan balance of nearly \$422,000, including arrears of more than \$170,000.

On site

The exhibition grounds are also home to the Truro Raceway, a harness racing track that was threatened with closure last year.

The Department of Agriculture is hiring an accounting firm to audit the commission after many unsuccessful attempts by the board to get information from the commission. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

An investment in the next generation. Premier talks up the role of universities

Education was at the top of Premier Stephen McNeil's agenda in a noon-hour address to members of the Sydney and Area Chamber of Commerce on Wednesday.

Describing it as the foundation of this Liberal government, McNeil said they have a responsibility to invest in the next generation.

"One of the things that

we need to do as a province is to stop apologizing for the number of post-secondary institutions that we have in this province. They are a great asset," he said.

"We, for too long, have used them as a liability on the budget line, as opposed to recognizing the economic driver they are."

CAPE BRETON POST

TOP SIX @ 6 Weeknights at 6 KB counts down the HOTTEST songs of the day

- 6 A Great Big World ft Christina Aguilera Say Something
- 5 Avicii Hey Brother
- 4 Pitbull ft Ke\$ha Timber
- 3 Eminem ft Rihanna The Monster
- 2 Lady Gaga Do What U Want
- 1 Katy Perry Ft Juicy J Dark Horse

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Rome. United Nations report urges Vatican to come clean on abuse

The Vatican "systematically" adopted policies that allowed priests to rape and molest tens of thousands of children over decades, a UN human rights committee said Wednesday, urging the Holy See to open its files on pedophiles and bishops who concealed their crimes.

The UN committee severely criticized the Holy See for its attitudes toward homosexuality, contraception and abortion and said it should change its own canon law to ensure children's rights and their access to health care are guaranteed.

The Vatican promptly objected and its UN ambassador accused the committee of having betrayed the international body's own objectives by allowing itself to be swayed by pro-gay ideologues.

The report, which took the Vatican by surprise in its harsh tone, puts renewed pressure on Pope Francis to move decisively on the abuse front and make good on pledges to create a Vatican commission to study sex abuse and recommend best practices to fight it.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Pope Francis greets the faithful as he arrives for his weekly general audience at the Vatican on Wednesday. ALESSANDRA TARANTINO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sochi security beefed up

Winter Olympics.

Russia's law-and-order president not taking terrorist threat lightly

President Vladimir Putin pointed Wednesday to the Boston Marathon bombings as a big reason for the intense security around the Winter Olympics starting in Russia this week.

The Chechen brothers accused of the 2013 Boston attacks hailed from just a few hundred kilometres away from the Olympic sites at Sochi.

Twin bombings in another southern Russian city in December have heightened terrorism fears around the Sochi events.

Intelligence agencies from multiple countries will be working together around the clock at a special headquarters in Sochi, Putin said while visiting Olympic sites Wednesday.

"In the U.S., people died at a marathon, during the G-8 there were terrorist acts in the London subway," he said.



Russian President Vladimir Putin signs a wall at the Coastal Cluster Olympic Village on Wednesday in Sochi. ALEXEI NIKOLSKY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Putin rose to power and popularity 15 years ago on law-and-order, hard-on-terrorism policies that critics say go too far and suppress human rights. He had long warned the West about the dangers posed by Chechen rebels, and urged closer security co-operation with Washington after the Bos-

ton Marathon attacks.

Putin has made security central to the Olympic project, in which he has taken an unusual personal interest.

Despite criticism and higher costs than any Olympics in history, Putin said Wednesday that "Russia is ready to host the games." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Backlash

Protests over anti-gay laws intensify

A U.S. Olympic sponsor and a UN panel condemned a Russian law criticized as a stifler of gay rights as protests took place around the world Wednesday.

The law signed by Russian President Vladimir Putin in July bans pro-gay "propaganda".

Detractors have pressed the International Olympic Committee and its corporate sponsors to denounce the law and call for its repeal. One of those sponsors, McDonald's, was targeted Wednesday by protesters in London and Paris. Protests also took place in St. Petersburg, Russia, New York, Jerusalem and Rio de Janeiro. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



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Children in Syria abused by Assad's forces: UN

Report. Kids have been subjected to 'unspeakable and unacceptable' suffering, says UN's Ban Ki-moon

Children in Syria have been tortured, sexually abused and subjected to "indiscriminate" attacks by President Bashar Assad's forces, and recruited for combat and terror operations by the rebels fighting to topple him during the country's nearly three-year-old conflict, a new United Nations report says.

The report to the UN Security Council by Secretary-

General Ban Ki-moon highlights the plight of children in the conflict from the beginning of the uprising against Assad in March 2011 until Nov. 15, 2013. It was given to the council this week and posted on the UN website Tuesday. Ban said Syrian children have been subjected to "unspeakable and unacceptable" suffering during that time. "Violations must come to an end now," he said.

Meanwhile, the Syrian government missed another deadline for destroying its chemical weapons Wednesday, but pledged to complete the process by June 30 as promised.

The Syrian civil war has killed more than 10,000 chil-

Detention facilities

According to the report, Syrian forces have been responsible for the arrest, arbitrary detention, ill treatment, and torture of children in detention facilities

- Children in government custody have reportedly suffered beatings, electric shock, sexual violence, mock executions, cigarette burns, sleep deprivation and solitary confinement.

dren according to UN estimates.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Bill Nye the evolution debate guy

TV's "Science Guy" Bill Nye speaks during a debate on evolution at the Creation Museum in Petersburg, Ky., on Tuesday. Nye's adversary was Ken Ham, the head of the museum, who believes the Earth was created 6,000 years ago by God and is told strictly through the Bible. Nye says he is worried the U.S. will not move forward if creationism is taught to children. DYLAN LOVAN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Israel OK's 500-plus apartments in settlements

Israeli planners on Wednesday gave final approval for 558 apartments in Jewish settlements in war-won east Jerusalem, which is sought by the Palestinians as a capital, officials said.

Palestinian officials said the decision undermines fragile U.S.-brokered negotiations with Israel on setting up a Pal-

estinian state alongside Israel.

Also Wednesday, Israel's chief peace negotiator rebuked fellow government ministers who have criticized U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry for his mediation efforts, pointing to widening divisions in Israel's centre-right governing coalition.

The Jerusalem municipality

said its planning committee approved building permits in the neighbourhoods of Har Homa, Neve Yaakov and Pisgat Ze'ev, built on land Israel captured in the 1967 war and later annexed. Most of the international community considers them illegal settlements.

Brachie Sprung, a municipality spokeswoman, said the

building projects received initial approval a few years ago, and that new building in Arab areas of Jerusalem was also approved Wednesday.

At the same time, the municipality carried out a court order Wednesday and demolished three Arab homes in east Jerusalem that were built without permits, police spokesman

Micky Rosenfeld said. Arab protesters hurled stones at police forces guarding the area and three people were arrested, he added.

Chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat said Israel is undermining Kerry's efforts. Lior Amihai of the Israeli settlement watchdog group Peace Now said the new approvals

are "shameful" at a time when negotiations are in a sensitive stage.

More than 550,000 Israeli settlers live in the West Bank and east Jerusalem. The Palestinians want to establish a state in those territories as well as the Gaza Strip, all captured by Israel in 1967.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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South Africa

Nine missing after mine fire

A gold-mining company in South Africa says nine employees are missing after an underground fire broke out at a mine west of Johannesburg.

The Harmony company said Wednesday that the fire reportedly started about 1.7 kilometre underground around 6 p.m. Tuesday, and that rescue teams were hampered by smoke and an earth-fall.

Harmony says rescue workers reached eight miners who had taken refuge from the fire at Doornkop mine, and they are now trying to locate the missing workers.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Central African Republic

Soldiers fatally assault man

The interim president of Central African Republic told the hundreds of soldiers standing in formation Wednesday that she was proud of them and called on their support to bring order to their anarchic country.

After she left, the soldiers broke ranks to stab and stomp a man in their midst to death. They dragged his corpse through the streets.

The attack shows the difficulty faced by the international community, which has deployed thousands of peacekeepers to try to stabilize it.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Iraq

Explosive attacks shake Baghdad

Multiple explosions rocked Baghdad on Wednesday, killing at least 34 people and sending plumes of smoke into the sky across the street from a major government building in a brazen reminder of the ability of insurgents to penetrate the heart of the capital.

The attacks come as al-Qaida-led militants are battling for control of mainly Sunni areas to the west in the first test of the Shiite-led government to maintain security in the country after the withdrawal of U.S. troops.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CN, union reach tentative deal to avoid strike

Keeping it rail. The federal government said it was prepared to force striking workers to go back on the job

CN Rail and the Teamsters union have reached a tentative contract agreement, averting a potential strike by 3,000 workers that could have come as early as this weekend.

Both sides said late Wednesday that details of the three-year contract won't be released until it is ratified by union members.

Teamsters spokesman Stephane Lacroix described the negotiations as a "bit chaotic," but said CN came to the union with a series of propos-

als late in the day.

"As a result, we're very happy to avoid a strike this weekend," Lacroix said, adding he hopes union members will ratify the agreement this time.

Lacroix noted that Labour Minister Kellie Leitch's announcement that Ottawa was preparing back-to-work legislation in the event of a strike likely helped move things along.

He said union members will soon get to see the agreement and likely vote on it in the coming weeks.

The union's strike notice came days after Teamster members, representing conductors, train employees and yard workers, rejected a tentative contract reached last fall with CN.

The federal government had said it was prepared to

intervene and force CN workers back on the job should they go ahead with a walk-out, which could have come as early as Saturday morning.

CN congratulated the union for averting a possible strike.

"This will ensure continued service to our customers in a very challenging environment where extreme winter conditions have hampered CN operations and affected service levels," said Jim Vena, CN's executive vice-president and chief operating officer.

"CN has offered to work closely with the union leadership to explain the terms of the agreement to union members over the next 45 days to help ensure a successful ratification of the agreement," Vena said in a statement.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Storm causes massive pileup on Ont. highway

Rescue workers attend the scene of a multi-vehicle pileup on Highway 401 westbound near Trenton, Ont., on Wednesday. Ontario provincial police said via Twitter that the accident was over a kilometre long and had closed down the highway. OPP said about 25 tractor trailers and 10 smaller vehicles were involved in the string of collisions as many roads in eastern and southern Ontario were covered in snow from the substantial snowstorm. JUSTIN CHIN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Vets. Medical discharges lead to 'area of unfairness'

Some Canadian soldiers given medical discharges find they don't qualify for benefits because Veterans Affairs uses different, more stringent criteria in an "unfair" process, the military ombudsman told a Senate committee Wednesday.

Pierre Daigle, whose term ends in a few weeks, testified many ex-soldiers have to fight to prove the conditions that made them ineligible to serve are a result of their service.

Once released, Veterans Affairs demands the ill and injured be subject to a separate assessment above and beyond

whatever examination has been conducted at National Defence. For veterans, it can be a bureaucratic conundrum that often leads to a denial of benefits and a lengthy appeals process.

"This is an area of unfairness which needs to be looked at," Daigle said.

Daigle said he has had heard from former members directly, even though his mandate doesn't extend to Veterans Affairs, and told senators one individual described the process "as the equivalent of being pushed off a cliff." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Philip Seymour Hoffman

Investigation into actor's death leads to drug charges

Four people were taken into custody on drug charges after police investigating Philip Seymour Hoffman's death executed search warrants, two people with knowledge of the investigation said Wednesday.

The medical examiner's office said more tests are needed to determine what killed the Oscar-winning actor.

Police believe Hoffman may have died from a drug overdose, though his death is being investigated as suspicious pending a more definitive ruling by the medical examiner.

Hoffman was found dead Sunday with a needle in his arm. Tests found heroin in samples from at least 50 packets in his apartment, law enforcement officials have said.

The four people were taken into custody Tuesday night after police executed search warrants at several apartments based on a tip that they may have supplied Hoffman with drugs, according to people with knowledge of the investigation. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Arturo. Polar bear unlikely to make move to Winnipeg

Winnipeg's Assiniboine Park Zoo says a polar bear living in an Argentinian zoo will probably have to stay there.

People have been protesting the treatment of Arturo, a polar bear at the Mendoza Zoo. With temperatures drastically warmer than what a polar bear is used to, and a lack of quality facilities for the bear, protesters say the bear is not

doing well.

The Assiniboine Park Conservancy has been in talks with the zoo to get Arturo transferred to the Assiniboine Park Zoo, but the APC said Wednesday it's unlikely to happen.

"It does not appear that a Canadian import permit can be issued for Arturo," the APC said in a statement.

ELISHA DACEY/METRO IN WINNIPEG

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HEEL EDGE OF TECH DEFENDS EBOOKS

I'm not really on the cutting edge when it comes to technology. I've spent a lot of my life living in the past (also known as New Brunswick), so I'm more like the back part of the knife that you push on when you're slicing.

Google tells me that part is called the spine, which still gives me too much credit, society-wise. The middle part is the heel. That seems about right.

I am on the cutting heel of technology.

So when I say that I believe ebooks are far superior to regular books and will one day replace them, don't take it as a bold pronouncement of Things to Come. Take it as a sign that smarter people than me have likely been saying it for years, and now that it's occurred to me it must be more mainstream than Leno.

Until recently I was among those who felt that paper books were unquestionably superior. Ebooks weren't great when



HE SAYS

John Mazerolle

metronews.ca

they first hit the market, which gave us traditionalists cover as we pointed out that the battery or lights or selection or cost weren't very good.

It was like we looked at the Wright brothers' rickety plane at Kitty Hawk and scoffed: "No way that thing is going to get 350 passengers from Vancouver to Hong Kong on an overnight flight. What were they thinking?"

But now that ebooks have long-life batteries, easy-to-read screens, excellent selection and good prices, people in the pro-book camp have resorted to a couple of paperweight arguments.

The first, from people who have not tried ebooks on principle, usually involves what might go wrong — like deleting a book or running out of power. These problems are so unlikely that it's like saying a horse is preferable to a car because horses never accidentally deploy their airbags.

The second, more popular argument is that there's "just

something" about books. The smell, the feel, the heft, the look. We are judging the book by its cover, and we'll caress it and smell it like it's Ryan Gosling or Scarlett Johansson, thank you very much. All well and good, except there is nothing intrinsically pleasant about the feel or smell of a book. I like those sensations too but it's only because I associate them with book reading and therefore feel positively about them. If it was all about heft we should just carry around five-pound Ps and Qs. "Don't mind these, they're fun to lift." (Besides, my e-reader has a cover that smells just fine.)

Paper books aren't going anywhere, any more than globes and vinyl records are, and all reading is good. But I think books will become curios and hobby pieces while ebooks will dominate the mainstream completely.

I've thought of starting a business that sells blank paper books (one per household) so families will still have something to grope and sniff as they read, but I'm sure someone else has already thought of it. So said the heel.

I suppose I could take a page out of their book but, well, you know.

ZOOM

Don't have a cow, man — have two



ALL PHOTOS 2014 SONY WORLD PHOTOGRAPHY AWARDS

Cattle race carnage gets a photo finish

Yongsheng Zheng's photograph gives us a glimpse into Indonesia's adrenaline-fuelled festival of Pacu Jawi (cow racing).

The annual event sees brave jockeys grab the tails of a pair of cows and skate across muddy rice fields barefoot while balancing on a wooden plank.

The Minangkabau people of West Sumatra have been marking the event for 400 years to celebrate the yearly end of the rice harvest season.

Zheng's photo made the World Photography Organisation's shortlist of the 2014 Sony World Photography Awards.

Pictured to the right are a few more of the nominees.

METRO



Sophie Gamand's Wet Dog is a series of portraits of dogs in mid-bath, photographed half a second before they shake their fur.



Louise Porter submitted this photograph of young men from the Kara tribe in Ethiopia.

Clickbait



ANDREW FIFIELD

andrew.fifield@metronews.ca

Did you know that there are people in Sochi aside from reporters cracking wise about a half-finished insta-city? There are athletes there too, and they seem much happier to be there. Follow these Canadians on Instagram to see for yourself.



CONTRIBUTED

Charles Hamelin:

A three-time medallist short-track speedskater who also happens to excel at the Maniacal Selfie In A Crowd event. He even got close enough to snap a photo of Vladimir Putin joining a Japanese athlete for a dining hall selfie. The caption calls him Vladimir Poutine. A genuine mistake or a potentially dangerous gag? Neither? Charles Hamelin: Enigma. (/charleshamelin)

Travis Gerrits:

A freestyle skier boasting a silver medal from the 2013 FIS World Championships, Gerrits represents

Canada in one of the Games' most photogenic sports. And if soaring skiers frozen in time doesn't sound like your kind of thing, he also has a very handsome dog. (/travisgerrits)

Canadian Olympic Team:

Since things have yet to officially kick off, the official feed is a patriotic mix of athletes looking chuffed in shiny new Olympic merchandise or athletes looking chuffed after success in Vancouver. But once the festivities are on, it'll be hard to beat the access. (/cdnolympicteam)

Twitter



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A petition has been started to remove a lifelike sculpture of a man in his underwear from a woman's college campus in the U.S. Should Sleepwalker stay or go?

@PorcelainTear I can understand why that such statue would cause a stir. It looks very real & somewhat disturbing for that reason

Comments

RE: How Far Would You Go For Free Breast Implants? Published online Feb. 5, 2014

If you have left over money, please donate to sick and starving kids around the world, not for shallow people who only care for their look.

Kim, posted to metronews.ca

"I would feel more confident" — for a month or two, that is, until you find something else about your body that makes you insecure.

Al_Gee, posted to metronews.ca

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU:
Send us your comments: halifaxletters@metronews.ca

Disappearing act makes a mark

Theatre. Vancouver play described as 'beautiful show' comes to the east coast for a run at the Bus Stop Theatre



BACKSTAGE PASS
Jenna Conter
halifax@metronews.ca

The lights go down in the Bus Stop theatre and there are several beats of silence.

Itai Erdal's voice cuts through the black. This Vancouver-based playwright and performer lights the way through a part-autobiographical journey part-theatrical lighting design master class in the story of *How to Disappear Completely*.

The paralleled meaning is quickly conveyed to the audience as Erdal brings us to his native Israel, where he had raced home upon hearing the news that his mother, diagnosed with lung cancer, had but a handful of months to live.

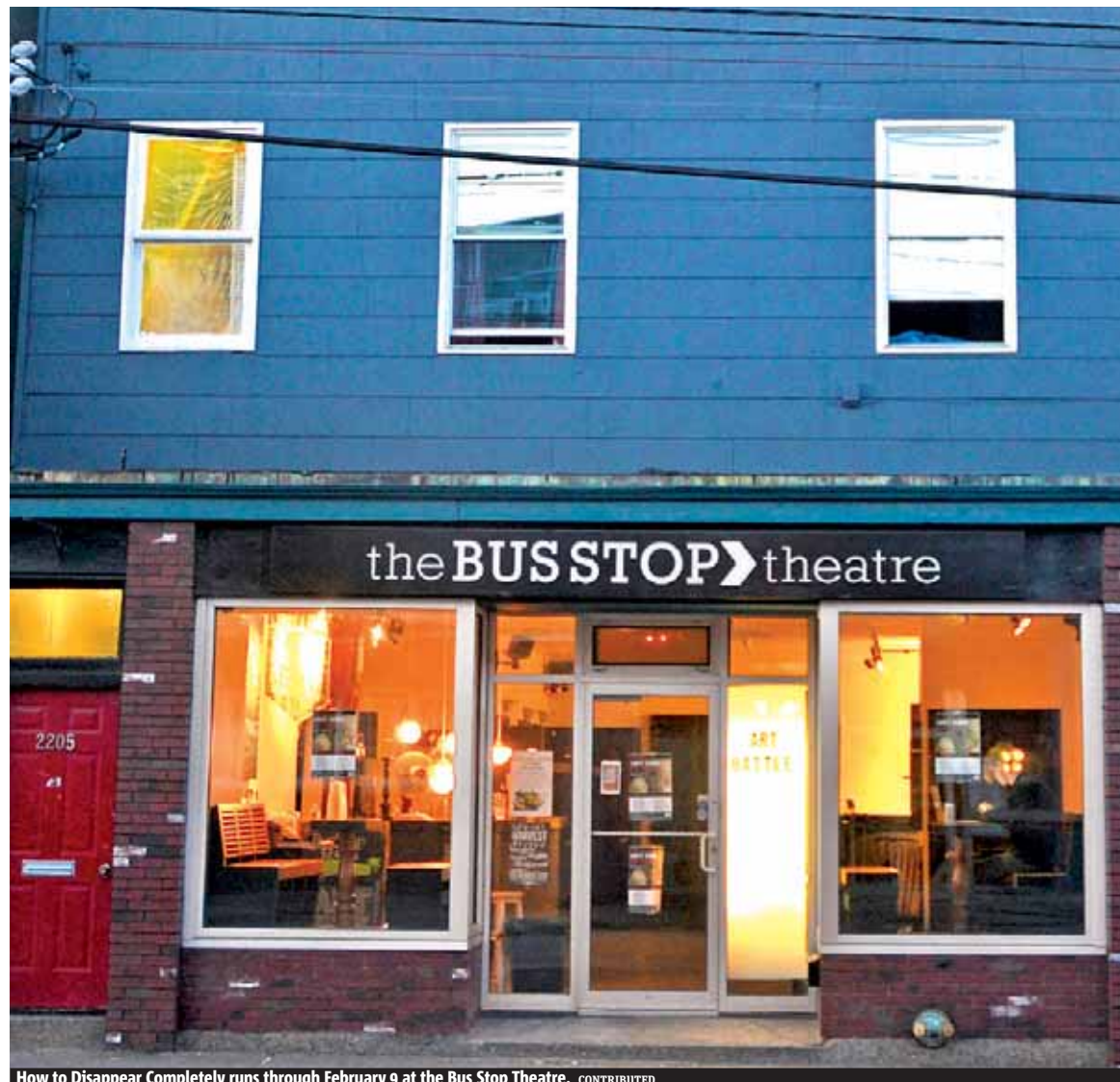
This is the most recent offering from the Halifax-based, and internationally renowned, 2b Theatre Company.

"It's the story about a guy saying goodbye to his mother done through an extraordinarily artful piece," 2b Theatre's co-artistic director Anthony Black tells me.

"The play is the process of how she chooses to disappear."

An award-winning piece from The Chop Theatre in Vancouver, 2b Theatre brings this jokingly "not 2b" piece to our backyard.

With their original works having been seen in over 30 cities and three continents, Black shares that their creation-to-production schedule, though impressive, does not necessi-



How to Disappear Completely runs through February 9 at the Bus Stop Theatre. CONTRIBUTED

tate having a Halifax home base space.

"It can take two-to-four years for a project to go from inception to production so we don't have enough production output to put on an eight-show season like the Neptune," he says.

"We've rented different spaces based on the needs of the different shows, which makes for a challenge for us to maintain an identity in

the audiences mind."

On now through Sunday, the Bus Stop Theatre plays the perfect host for this minimalist yet powerful and dimensional story.

Though not a creation from the minds of those at 2b, the happy timing of this visiting piece provides a unique opportunity to showcase other stories to our local audiences, a treat not otherwise seen on this coast.

"In this case we didn't have anything in the production cycle that was at the mature stage so we were able to produce this show," Black says.

"In our travels we get to see a lot of extraordinary shows and meet interesting artists and we frequently think, 'we'd love to do that in Halifax.'"

"This is our first time doing that. It's a beautiful show."

Off to the show?

- **What.** *How to Disappear Completely*
- **When.** Through Feb. 9
- **Where.** Bus Stop Theatre
- **Tickets.** 2btheatre.com or call 453-6267

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Clay Aiken. ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

American Idol runner-up Clay Aiken puts career on hold to run for Congress

Former American Idol runner-up Clay Aiken is running for Congress in North Carolina.

Aiken said Wednesday he'll seek the Democratic nomination for the seat currently held by Rep. Renee Ellmers.

The 35-year-old Aiken has been a special education teacher in Wake County. He

says he decided to put his entertainment career on hold and seek to represent the state's 2nd Congressional District.

He says he considers Washington to be dysfunctional and will focus on jobs and the economy, as well as the importance of education.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cher skips wedding over feud with son Elijah

Cher's ongoing feud with her son, Elijah Blue, and his new wife, Angie King, shows no sign of abating and recently resulted in Cher missing their wedding and excluding them from family holiday activities, Blue tells the National Enquirer.

"I've always been the black sheep of my family. We have lots of ups and downs, and now isn't the best time," says Blue, who married King in early December. "It's like a Mexican standoff, but we have a history."

The latest spat apparently results from an October falling out between Cher and her new daughter-in-law that



Cher

prompted the Burlesque star to kick the pair out of her Malibu home, where they'd been staying. "You've got two strong women, two big bulls in the pen," Blue says. "I think there's a respect and I think they butt heads."

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word



Selena sneaks off to rehab — for 'emotional issues'

Selena Gomez reportedly snuck away for a two-week stay at an Arizona rehab facility, though her rep insists to Radar Online it was for emotional issues.

"Selena voluntarily spent time at (Dawn at the) Meadows, but not for substance abuse," her rep says, though other sources insist the former Disney star has been

"partying very hard" in the months leading up to her secret stay.

"With fame came a partying lifestyle," says a source, while another adds that ex-boyfriend Justin Bieber probably wasn't helping matters.

"Selena came to understand just what a bad influence Justin had been on her life," the second source says. "I don't know whether Justin pushed her to drug use, but amongst their close-knit group of friends, smoking was commonplace. Justin and Selena would smoke marijuana together regularly."

METRO WORLD NEWS



Charlize Theron

Charlize contemplating marriage with new beau Sean Penn

Things are apparently moving pretty fast for new couple Charlize Theron and Sean Penn, as Penn has reportedly already moved into Theron's home and is contemplating matrimony, according to Radar Online.

"The two began talking about marriage in the last few weeks, after Sean moved into Charlize's house," a

source says. "She has never wanted to get married, but seeing how Sean interacts with (her son) Jackson, she is having a change of heart."

"For the longest time, Charlize thought it was just going to be her and Jackson, and she was OK with that. For her to now be talking about getting married is a huge departure for Charlize."

Twitter



@TheRock

They sleep. We grind. #NoSnoozeButtonDammit



@ElizabethBanks

I promised you immaturity on @TheDailyShow, and I believe I delivered.



@SaraKSilverman

When I search "Basketball sneakers, women" on @Amazon all that comes up is a high-heel sneaker wedge

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SHOPPERS
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Beckham gets a kick out of the fashion business

Let's talk about Becks.

Whether you know him for his athletic skill or naked torso doesn't really matter at this point. David Beckham's empire is growing and no one is going to bring him (or his boxer briefs) down

Everybody knows who David Beckham is, either from his career as a football star or as the fashion icon and trendsetter he has become.

Metro Sweden's fashion editor Martin Hansson met David Beckham in New York to talk about the new collaboration with the Swedish fashion giant that premiered during the Super bowl weekend.

What has it been like to go from football player to a fashion icon?

I have always been very interested in clothes and style.

One day I love wearing a really tailored suit and the next day I like wearing what I'm wearing today: a pair of casual jeans and a sweater.

The opportunity to, in collaboration with H & M, produce an underwear collection that reflects my personal style feels natural and in tune with the times.

Your new collection, David



I dare you to deny that this man makes undies look good.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Beckham for H & M, has been increased and is now aimed at younger boys as well. What message would

you like to send to them?

I would like to tell them to go for their passion, work

Family first

Victoria loves the pictures and just thinks it's fun. But my sons like the exposure most of all and think it's great to see their daddy everywhere.

David Beckham on H&M campaign

hard and stay focussed. I have always given 100 per cent in everything I do, both in football and in fashion. If you work hard enough and have fun at the same time there is a chance that you'll reach your dreams.

How does your wife Vic-

toria feel about seeing you half naked on billboards and on TV all over the world?

(Laughs) Victoria loves the pictures and just thinks it's fun. But my sons like the exposure most of all and think it's great to see their daddy everywhere. I often wear the clothes from the new collection at home so they recognize it.

If you could look into your future, what do you hope to see?

I want to continue working with all that I'm doing today but also with new projects. Because I've played football the past 22 years it is refreshing to do something completely different now.

Get to know David

THE FACTS

Name: David Beckham

Age: 38

In the news: Has designed a new collection for H & M and is seen in a large campaign that premiered at the Super Bowl this weekend.

Lives: In Notting Hill, London

Family: Married to Victoria Beckham, four children.



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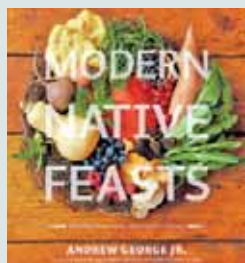


Sunnyside Mall

Oysters Rockefeller goes First Nations

Cookbook of the Week

Native eats for the 21st century



Full of healthy North American fare, *Modern Native Feasts* by Andrew George Jr. updates tradition for the 21st century. Native American cuisine comes of age in this collection that reinterprets and updates traditional Native recipes with modern, healthy twists. Andrew George Jr. was head chef for aboriginal foods at the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver. **METRO**

FLASH FOOD



From your fridge
to your table in
30 minutes or less

"I use this recipe to teach Aboriginal students a classical method of preparing seafood," writes Andrew George Jr. in his book *Modern Native Feasts*. "Using stinging nettles, dandelion greens, or sorrel instead of traditional spinach, gives a new twist to this dish"

1. Preheat broiler to high.

2. In frying pan, melt butter and sauté celery, onions, garlic, parsley, greens, and dash of Pernod. Stir constantly for about 3 minutes. Remove from heat.

Be careful

Take care when opening oysters. Protect your hand by wearing an oyster glove or covering a knife with a towel.

Ingredients

- 1/4 cup (60 ml) unsalted butter
- 1 celery stalk, finely sliced
- 2 green onions, finely sliced
- 1 garlic clove, finely minced
- 1 tbsp finely chopped parsley
- 1 cup (250 ml) finely chopped stinging nettles, dandelion greens, or sorrel leaves
- dash Pernod, or other anise-flavoured liqueur
- 2 slices fresh white bread, crusts removed, torn into pieces
- 12 fresh oysters in shell
- 1 tbsp Pernod
- rock salt, for serving
- 12 lemon wedges, to garnish
- 12 parsley sprigs, to garnish
- salt, to taste
- Tabasco sauce, to taste

3. In a blender, combine greens mixture with bread and process for about 30 seconds. Using an oyster knife, twist open shells and remove oysters. In a large bowl, toss oysters with 1 tbsp Pernod. Drain oysters and reserve liquid. Remove any shell fragments. Discard top shells, clean and dry bottom shells.



This recipe makes 12 oysters (two to six servings, depending on how large they are and much your guests like oysters). TRACEY KUSIEWICZ OF FOODIE PHOTOGRAPHY (FOODIEPHOTOGRAPHY.COM)

4. Line a baking tray with rock salt and place oyster shells on top. Place 1 oyster into each shell and spoon reserved liquid onto each. Spoon crumb mixture on top, completely cover-

ing each oyster. Broil for 1-2 minutes, until topping bubbles. Arrange oysters on a serving dish and garnish with sprigs of parsley and lemon wedges. Season oysters to taste with salt

and/or Tabasco sauce.

RECIPE EXCERPTED FROM *MODERN NATIVE FEASTS: HEALTHY, INNOVATIVE, SUSTAINABLE CUISINE* BY ANDREW GEORGE JR. (PUBLISHED BY ARSENAL PULP PRESS, 2013).

Vanquish the darkest days

DIY. Want to up the visual appeal of any room? A lighting plan is the place to start

The dark days of winter can be hard to bear, but don't wait for the summer sun to shed some light inside your home. Effective lighting is often overlooked during renovations, but it can turn a boring room into a dynamic, year-round oasis.

Since electrical work is extremely dangerous and regulated provincially, it's always recommended to hire a certified electrician for installation, but that doesn't mean you

can't have fun dreaming up your best-lit space.

Guiding light

The first step to improve a room's lighting is to define its purpose. For example, kitchens need bright light around countertops to safely prepare food and read recipes. Living rooms need to be more flexible and accommodate activities like reading or watching a movie. Consider what each room is used for before deciding on what kind of lighting to install.

Layer lights

To make a room more visually interesting, incorporate lighting at different heights. In the kitchen, recessed lights can be complemented with lights under the cabinets and pendant lights above an island.

This technique produces a softer glow than one central and bright light, resulting in a more relaxing atmosphere. Wall sconces add an appealing visual aesthetic to almost any room and are great for adding symmetry around fireplaces, mirrors or beds.

Highlight key areas

Draw attention to artwork, bookshelves or a unique



Track lighting can help draw attention to bookcases or artwork. ISTOCK

decorative object by strategically placing lights to highlight these pieces. Track lighting is a practical solution that allows individual lights to be easily moved and aimed in different directions.

Installing dimmers can also help make a room's lighting options more flexible and set the mood for everything from a romantic dinner to family game nights.

Don't leave design in the dark

While lighting placement is important, the design of the fixtures is equally significant. Pay careful attention to proportions and avoid dwarfing a dining room table with an oversized chandelier, or adding a vintage lamp to a modern room. With replaceable shades, lamps are a great investment that can be updated as styles change. For hanging lights, pick a stylish design with an understated colour so attention isn't directed toward the ceiling.

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Henoc Muamba

Former X-Man trying hand at NFL

The Winnipeg Blue Bombers have released Canadian linebacker and former St. Francis Xavier X-Men standout Henoc Muamba so he can pursue NFL opportunities.

Muamba has been working out recently with NFL teams, including the New England Patriots.

He was slated to become a CFL free agent Feb. 11 but can sign with the team of his choice immediately.

Winnipeg selected Muamba first overall in the 2011 CFL draft and he's become a key member of their defence.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Tournament of Hearts

Smith out of playoff contention

Nova Scotia's Heather Smith dropped an 8-6 decision to Saskatchewan on Wednesday night to be eliminated from playoff contention at the Scotties Tournament of Hearts in Montreal.



Heather Smith
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Smith (3-6) began the day with a 7-3 triumph over the Yukon.

Against Saskatchewan's Stefanie

Lawton (7-1), Smith rallied back from a 4-1 deficit only to run out of rocks in the 10th end when her opponent scored two with the hammer in nine.

Team Canada sits in first place at 8-0.

METRO



Dacey, Sullivan undefeated at Tankard

Skip Mark Dacey throws a rock against Ian Fitzner-LeBlanc during Day 1 action of the Nova Scotia Tankard men's curling championship at the Halifax Curling Club on Wednesday afternoon. Dacey defeated Fitzner-LeBlanc 8-2 and finished the day as one of two teams still undefeated at 2-0, joining fellow Mayflower Curling Club member Tom Sullivan. Action runs through Sunday.

JEFF HARPER/METRO

'Heart and soul of our team'

AUS hockey. Saint Mary's men's hockey assistant Tom Lee has club firmly behind him in his fight with cancer

Inspiration loop

"I get huge satisfaction watching our players achieve their goals."

Saint Mary's assistant men's hockey coach Tom Lee



ANDREW RANKIN
andrew.rankin@metronews.ca

Just before he was due for a bone marrow transplant, Tom Lee postponed the procedure just so he could embark on a U.S. road trip with the Saint Mary's men's hockey team last October.

The Huskies assistant coach, who has been become like a second father to virtually every one of his players in his five years with the team, knew how excited the guys were about matching up against a couple of NCAA teams.

In the late stages of non-Hodgkin lymphoma, he was advised by his doctor to stay home and prepare for the procedure.

"I would have done anything to be with them, but I couldn't," reminisced Lee. "They're a part of the Saint Mary's hockey team, but it goes beyond that. I love those boys, and I mean that in the truest sense."

The day before the procedure, he was joined by his dear friend, Huskies head coach Trevor Steinburg. As Lee lay on his hospital bed after being blasted with all the radiation his body could take, Steinburg was busy firing off texts, keeping players in the loop

The messages of support came in droves.

Shawn O'Donnell, who suited up for the Huskies last year and is now playing for the AHL's Hartford Wolfpack, wrote: "I'm sitting here crying and I feel so helpless that I can't be there with Tom."

"Do you know how uplifting that is?" said Lee.

There was a 30 per cent chance he would die within 100 days after the procedure.

But Lee knew the support of the team "would lift him beyond that."

The Huskies will welcome him back to the Halifax Forum in a pre-game ceremony on Friday before a game against the Acadia Axemen. Called

Tom Strong Night, it's entirely conceived by the players.

Flattered, he said it would stand as a tribute to Halifax hockey fans.

"The biggest thing is it brings our hockey community together. We're always at odds at one another when we play, but it's confirmation of how tight and collegial our hockey community is."

For team captain Lucas Bloodoff, it's the least the players could do for a man who has done so much for them.

"He's been there for me since the day I came here," said Bloodoff.

"He's the heart and soul of our team."

Now in remission with no trace of cancer in his bone marrow, Lee is already looking to the future, which involves the Huskies.

"Once I get the OK from the doctor, I'm right back in with both feet."

4 SPORTS

Men's Hockey

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www.smuhuskies.ca

*TomStrong Night

In appreciation and support for
Assistant Coach Tom Lee.

The Huskies will be raising money
for the Leukemia and Lymphoma
Society of Nova Scotia.

LEUKEMIA & LYMPHOMA
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f t i

Greater in Year 8?



Kaillie Humphries and Heather Moyse practise a run at the Sanki Sliding Centre on Wednesday in Sochi, Russia. ALEX LIVESEY/GETTY IMAGES

Bobsled. She's dominated the circuit since winning gold in 2010, and Calgarian says she might have another gear for Sochi

Kaillie Humphries won Olympic bobsled gold four years ago and has finished first at the last two world championships.

In what should give her rivals cause for concern in Sochi, she is just now hitting her peak.

"They say it takes eight to 10 years to build a really good bobsleigh pilot," Humphries said. "I'm at year eight right now."

The timing seems to be lining up perfectly for the 28-year-old. She has won three World Cup titles this season and is in her usual perch on top of the overall standings.

She reunited with brakewoman Heather Moyse of Summerside, P.E.I., and they opened the campaign with an impressive win in Calgary.

Triumphant underdogs four years ago in Vancouver, now they're the team to beat.

Zen in a bullet



"You have to be able to feel, you have to be able to see. So on the track walk I'm able to see things slowed down. I'm able to look at things exactly as they are."

Kaillie Humphries, on racing down a bobsled run at 130 km/h.

"She's got great expectations," Canadian coach Tom De La Hunty said of Humphries. "She's won the last two world championships. So at the top level, she knows how to deal with the pressure and the pressure is going to be great this time I'll tell you."

Humphries has emerged as one of the faces of the Canadian team in the lead-up to Sochi. It's a position she seems to enjoy.

The Canadian bobsled team attended a half-hour introductory news conference Wednesday at the Gorki Media Centre in Sochi. Humphries stayed for an extra 20 minutes, holding court with reporters in her friendly and engaging manner.

The spotlight shines brightly every four years and Humphries is ready.

"Mentally I'm stronger," she said. "Physically I feel like I'm in a great position right now. Overall it takes a whole package. It's about balance, it's not just one aspect. I'm definitely a lot more well-rounded. I still get tested, I still have my moments when I fail those tests."

"I still am learning a lot in the position that I'm in."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canadian flag-raising

'Sense of majesty' at welcome party

As the sun set over Russia's Black Sea, it shined on the Canadian flag just as it was hitting the top of the flagpole with the national anthem playing in the background.

It marked an unofficial start at the Sochi Olympics for Canada. It didn't take long for chef de mission Steve Podborski to stop thinking about red and white and start dreaming about gold.

"When the Canadian flag went up, the sun is glaring on it, it blows out and you can see the Maple Leaf and

I'm thinking, 'I'm sure we're going to hear more of that,'" he said. "It was really, really great."

Before the flag went up, about a hundred Canadian athletes marched into the city's international plaza. They watched the Choir of Siberia sing and dance and a Russian honour guard march beside the stage.

It was an expression of Russian culture two days before the official opening ceremony in Sochi.

"The Russians really bring a sense of majesty and something big to a ceremony like this," Podborski said. "It was really charming."

THE CANADIAN PRESS



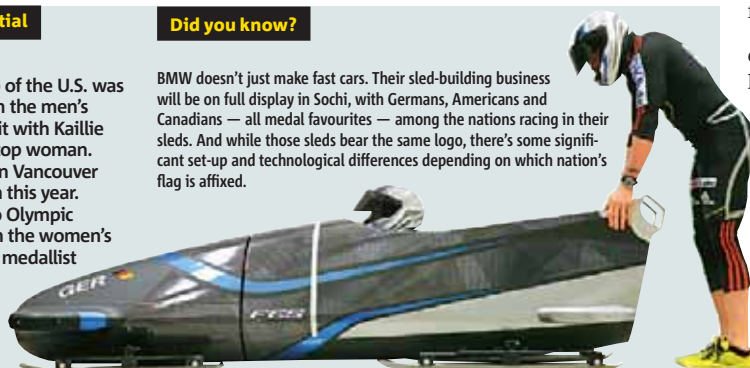
Team Canada is welcomed by the official flag-raising ceremony on Wednesday in Sochi. NATHAN DENETTE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Repeat potential

Steven Holcomb of the U.S. was the top driver on the men's World Cup circuit with Kaillie Humphries the top woman. Both won gold in Vancouver and might again this year. The U.S. has two Olympic track athletes on the women's team, with gold medalist Lauryn Williams and Lolo Jones qualifying as push athletes.

Did you know?

BMW doesn't just make fast cars. Their sled-building business will be on full display in Sochi, with Germans, Americans and Canadians — all medal favourites — among the nations racing in their sleds. And while those sleds bear the same logo, there's some significant set-up and technological differences depending on which nation's flag is affixed.



'You can't force healing': Stamkos staying home

Steven Stamkos will not play for Team Canada at the Sochi Olympics after tests revealed Wednesday that his broken right leg is not completely healed.

Tampa Bay Lightning doctors said they couldn't clear him to play after examining his most recent CT scan and will re-evaluate his condition again in two to three weeks.

It's a big blow for the 23-year-old, who had been optimistic earlier this week that he might be able to play by as soon as Saturday.

"Today is obviously very disappointing for me," Stamkos said in a release. "I hon-



Steven Stamkos has been out since he broke his leg Nov. 11. He underwent surgery to have a titanium rod inserted into his right tibia. NATHAN DENETTE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

estly believe that we did everything possible in order to have my injured leg ready in time for the Olympics, but I real-

ize you can't force healing. I know, in the best interest of my long-term health, I cannot represent Canada in Sochi, as

Yzerman's next decision

Hockey Canada did not immediately announce a replacement for Stamkos, though Claude Giroux, Lightning teammate Marty St. Louis and James Neal figured to be the leading candidates.

much as I would like to."

Lightning general manager Steve Yzerman, who is also Team Canada's executive director, said Stamkos "should not be participating in game action at any time in the near future." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Olympic relay. Flame reaches final destination

The Olympic flame reached Sochi Wednesday, following a 65,000-kilometre route, the longest in the history of the Games.

The relay generated genuine public enthusiasm, featuring famous cultural figures, athletes and other

celebrities, and drawing big crowds across Russia.

But it also has seen some spectacular gaffes, with the flame flickering out on dozens of occasions and, in some cases, even engulfing the bearers.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Record-setting journey

The relay started in Moscow on Oct. 7 and stopped at more than 130 cities and towns across Russia. Along the way, the torch travelled to:

- **The North Pole.** Aboard a nuclear-powered icebreaker, the ceremony involved torch bearers from eight Arctic nations.
- **Outer space.** On Nov. 7, a rocket carried the torch to the International Space Station. Cosmonauts Oleg Kotov and Sergei Ryazanskiy then took the torch on an unprecedented spacewalk Nov. 9. For safety

reasons, the torch didn't burn aboard the ISS.

- **Europe and Russia's highest mountain.** Russian mountaineers lit the torch atop Mount Elbrus — at 18,510 feet — the highest mountain in Russia and Europe.

- **The world's deepest lake.** In November, divers plunged into Lake Baikal, the world's biggest and deepest freshwater lake, with special torches burning underwater.



Horoscopes

Aries

March 21 - April 20

Something will happen today that takes you by surprise but if you stand back and look at it in an objective light, you will see it had to occur. Chances are a few weeks from now, you will be glad it happened.

Taurus

April 21 - May 21

Do you go out and have fun or do you stay in and get work done? If you are smart — you will sacrifice short-term enjoyment for long-term peace of mind.

Gemini

May 22 - June 21

You have thought about what you are planning and all you need to do now is get on with it. Don't worry that certain people may not approve. Most likely they're jealous.

Cancer

June 22 - July 23

As Mercury turns retrograde today don't take anything for granted. But the world should not take you for granted either. Do something out of character, something no one would ever expect of you.

Leo

July 24 - Aug. 23

Unexpected events will disrupt your routine today and you won't be happy about it. But as there is nothing you can do to change things there's not much point getting uptight about it, is there? Stay calm and carry on.

Virgo

Aug. 24 - Sept. 23

If a colleague makes an error and causes you problems today, don't make a big deal of it. Everyone makes mistakes so do what you can do make them feel better.

Libra

Sept. 24 - Oct. 23

There will be disorder today, most likely at work. Colleagues may discover that they are not up to keeping the promises they made. You could see it coming, so you won't be fazed.

Scorpio

Oct. 24 - Nov. 22

You may have to be abrupt with certain people today, simply because they are too slow to work things out for themselves. Don't bruise egos for fun but make sure what needs to get done does.

Sagittarius

Nov. 23 - Dec. 21

With mind planet Mercury beginning one of its retrograde phases there is simply no point rushing to get things done. In the greater scheme of things, they're really not that important.

Capricorn

Dec. 22 - Jan. 20

Be careful when dealing with those whose outlook on life is different to yours. If you adopt the attitude that you're always right and they're always wrong, conflict is inevitable.

Aquarius

Jan. 21 - Feb. 19

You try to be honest in your dealings but you just can't get through to people. This is likely to be a theme of the next few weeks while Mercury moves retrograde, so get used to it.

Pisces

Feb. 20 - March 20

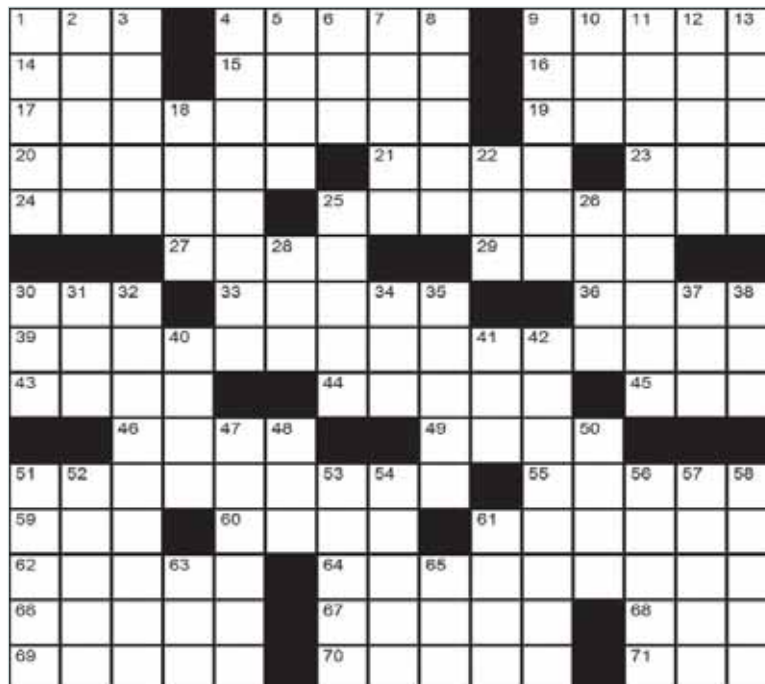
You're hardly a decisive person and with Mercury, planet of communication and the mind, turning retrograde in your sign today you will change your mind yet again. Others won't like it but you are who you are.

SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

Across

- Not near
- Played over
- "Batman" star Adam, and surname-sakes
- Tenn. neighbour
- Southwestern Ontario gorge village
- Sir Newton
- Wayne and Shuster: 2 wds.
- Steamy spot
- Geena's 1991 title role
- Captain Hook's sidekick
- Wine aperitif
- Coffee brand
- Helmet part: 2 wds.
- Simon Cowell's production company
- Athena's walkway
- "___ sure be nice if..."
- Some sound
- Feminine suffix
- PEI is geographically unique because it what?: 3 wds.
- Uni
- Also, in Montreal
- Kit
- "Wow."
- Ages
- Certain classical composer
- Ms. Knightley
- Marion ___ (Pioneering female aviator of Canada, b.1918)
- d.1995)
- Use red pen
- Did a sports team transaction
- ___-toothed tiger
- Canadian actor who plays Captain Renard on "Grimm": 2 wds.
- Carpeting 'spot'
- "We Can Work ___



- by The Beatles
- Navigator's dir.
- Goes up-and-down in weight
- Crowned heads in Russia, once
- Brit's thank yous
- Actualities
- Hawaiian hi

- Noodle dish
- Eddie ___, Marius in "Les Misérables" (2012)
- "Air Force One" (1997) actor Mr. Baskin
- Towels holder
- In ___ (Hurried)
- Ms. Watts
- Most sage
- Conductor, ___ Pekka Salonen
- Bigg Soxx: Canadian rapper on new song "Heroes" feat. Choclaire, prod. by C4ENT.
- Actress Ms. Raymond
- Cliff type
- Deer sorts

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN

- Ells and Ems followers
- ___ phrase
- Steel-___ boots
- Lettuce variety
- Doctrine
- Even if, briefly
- Splashy '80s Canadian series: 2 wds.
- Old French coin
- Actor, Buddy ___
- Three, in Turin
- Ballpark fig.
- Tooth part
- Bear, in Barcelona
- Hockey arena regulars, colloquially: 2 wds.
- Martin and Charlie
- Brick carrier
- Char, in cooking
- Domineering
- Lyre-playing Muse
- Sojourn
- Mona Lisa's room at the Louvre in Paris, Salle des ___
- Boomtown Rats' "___ Like Mondays" (1984)
- Queen: Spanish
- Tools for woodworkers
- Wee weekday
- "Blame It on ___" (1984)
- ___ guy walks into..."

Yesterday's Crossword

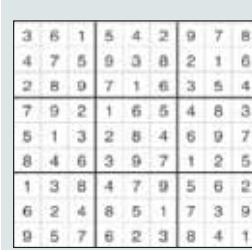


Sudoku

How to play

Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

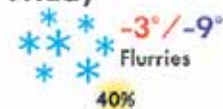
Yesterday's Sudoku



Today



Friday



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